



22 April 2022

Dear Residents and Relatives,

COVID-19 Update #46

I believe you must have heard from the news; the Government has made some [announcements](#) yesterday further relax the pandemic management measures for the general public that take effect from 6pm on 22/04/2022.

In response to the call by Australian businesses and industries as a result of ongoing staff shortages impacted not only because the staff getting COVID-19 themselves but also because they cannot go to work being close contacts to a confirmed case despite they did not fall sick. After having taken into consideration of the high COVID-19 vaccination rates achieved in Australia that significantly reduced the severity and risk of fatality from contracting COVID-19, each State government was directed to adjust their close contact isolation measures.

Having said this, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that the new changes DO NOT apply to aged care services &/ settings or aged care workers.

Our current COVID-19 management practices and measures will continue until further notice:

1. Each facility's COVID-19 Booster Vaccination Status

All ANHF residential aged care facilities have achieved very high COVID-19 booster vaccination rate:

As at 21/04/2022	Residents	Staff
Bernard Chan Nursing Home	97.67%	98.65%
Chow Cho-Poon Nursing Home	97.67%	100%
Lucy Chieng Aged Care Centre	92.8%	99.02%

2. Visiting to Nursing Home

- Residents are permitted to have two visitors aged 12 years and over, plus two children aged under 12 years per day.
- Visitors aged 12 years and over must have received a second dose of a COVID vaccination at least 14 days prior to their visit.
- Up to 2 children under 12 years are permitted to visit provided they are accompanied by a fully vaccinated person.
- Babies and toddlers under 3 years of age should not wear a mask as it is a choking hazard.
- All nursing homes would continue to ensure residents are able to be visited by one [essential visitor](#) at all times. However after a risk assessment, the nursing home may choose to limit visitors to one visitor per day per resident and no

children under twelve when COVID-19 is circulating in the local community. In these instances, we will continue to support residents to be visited outdoor; and connect to their family by phone or by audio visual means; or our staff will continue to support “window visit” or outdoor visit; or transport dropped off food or other items to the residents.

- All visitors must pass entry health screening including presenting evidence of a negative Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) within 24 hours OR a negative result of a PCR Test which was completed within 72 hours, and are compliant with PPE and visiting protocols.
- Visiting duration and visitor numbers are restricted by the booking schedule **for shared meeting venue** (unless obtained prior agreement from facility manager);
- All visitors must wear at least a surgical mask over their nose and mouth or other PPE such as N95 mask and face shield as directed by the facility staff while visiting indoors (therefore visitors are requested not to eat with the residents inside the facility at the moment). For reasons when masks can be removed, please see [Additional Advice – Mandatory mask wearing](#);
- Visit should occur in the resident’s single room or facility designated area. Wherever possible, the visit should be in an outdoor area. Visits should not be in any inside communal areas.
- Fire brigades, Ambulance staff and police are emergency service providers who are not classified as visitors and are not required to undertake a RAT prior to entry.
- People who are providing a service to the resident (including a health or other professional service) are not counted as a visitor.
- [Exemptions](#) may be granted by Facility Manager to residents require essential care or End-of-Life visits after risk assessment subject to the visitors’ agreement to follow additional risk mitigation measures such as enhanced PPE (N95, Face Shield, Gown and Gloves).
- Please note that each nursing home may need to take swift response to newly identified exposure risks, the visiting conditions may change in short notice and vary from one nursing home to another.

3. Residents leaving the facility

- Residents can leave the facility except when the facility is in COVID-19 outbreak red lockdown.
 - Residents are permitted to leave the facility for medical appointments but must abide by the current [Public Health \(COVID-19 General\) Order 2021](#).
- Residents are required to receive a risk assessment by the Facility Manager who could advise the residents and their families’ risk to leave the facility.
- Residents should not leave the facility if they have [COVID-19 symptoms](#) until they have had a RAT or PCR test and have received a negative result.
- Residents who are tested COVID-19 positive required permission from the Public Health Unit to leave the facility.
- Residents who return from having left the nursing home will be required to do RAT on the day of returning, and repeat RATs over the next 6 days. If the resident has no symptom and the RAT is negative, s/he do not need to isolate. If they develop any symptoms of COVID-19 or their RAT is positive, they would be required to be isolated immediately and have a PCR test.

- Residents and the persons responsible for taking the resident out are reminded that they should ensure COVID Safe behaviours must be observed including practicing physical distancing (1.5m) and hand hygiene at all times.
- Facilities will ensure that residents are provided with appropriate personal protective equipment, infection control and mask wearing advice if they leave the facility. See the latest [face mask rules](#).
- If a person cannot wear a face mask because of a disability, physical or mental health illness or condition, they must carry either:
 - a medical certificate or letter signed by a registered health practitioner (such as a doctor) or a registered NDIS provider or
 - a statutory declaration.

4. **Visitors must not enter the facility at all if they**

- have [COVID-19 symptoms](#)
- are a close or [casual contact](#) of a person with confirmed COVID-19 unless they have completed their self-isolation and testing requirements. [Close contacts](#) should not enter high risk settings for at least 14 days since their exposure to a COVID-positive person.
- are waiting for a COVID-19 test result.
- have been overseas in the previous 14 days, unless they are:
 - fully vaccinated, it has been at least 7 days after arrival and they have received a negative rapid antigen test 6 days or later after arriving in NSW.

5. **Positive Rapid Antigen Test results**

- From 12 January 2022, a person is legally required to register his/her positive rapid antigen test result through the Service NSW portal.
- Where a resident is unable to independently complete the information on the Service NSW portal, the Nursing Home would register the result on behalf of the resident.

6. **Preparing for winter flu season**

- Currently we are taking precautionary steps in preparing for the 2022 winter flu season.
- All residents are strongly encouraged to receive the 2022 seasonal flu vaccine, which can be given on the same day or at any time before or after the winter COVID-19 booster. (The COVID-19 winter booster can be given 4 months after their first booster dose, or 4 months after a confirmed COVID-19 infection if they've had COVID-19 since their first booster dose.)
- It is strongly recommended that all visitors and staff be vaccinated for influenza before this winter and you can read more about the importance of influenza vaccination from [here](#).

7. **What will happen when the nursing home is impacted by a COVID-19 exposure or outbreak?**

- These are the government's current definitions on exposure or outbreak:
 - **An RCF COVID-19 exposure is defined as:**
 - any case of COVID-19 in staff, residents or a visitor at the facility during their infectious period that does not meet the definition of an outbreak.
 - **An RCF COVID-19 outbreak is defined as either:**
 - Two or more residents of a residential care facility who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 via RAT or PCR test within 5 days and has been

- onsite at the residential care facility at any time during their infectious period;
or
- Five or more staff, visitors and/or residents of the residential care facility diagnosed with COVID-19 through RAT or PCR test within past 7 days who worked/visited during their infectious period.
- In general, we will take immediate measure to identify the persons who had been exposed to the risks and assess the level of risk and required measures.
- The exposure or confirmation cases will be reported to local Public Health Unit and the Commonwealth Health department for their advice and directions.
- As a precautionary measure, we will conduct RAT or PCR test for all affected residents.
- Antiviral treatment pathway is available to affected residents.
- Currently our staff will continue be required to pass daily health screening and RAT requirement before allowing to work. Additional infection control and risk mitigation measures such as social distancing and use of appropriate PPE in accordance to the staff's roles continue to implement as preventative measures against COVID-19 or other infections.

Communication

We appreciate your understanding that we may have to proceed swiftly in response to the COVID-19 situation. We will use other means such as telephone call or SMS to contact you, in addition to email at times of urgency. Please do not hesitate to contact our Facility Managers if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely



Jenny Chua
General Manager, Care Services